Strengthening Educator Practice
Learning & Inquiry in PLCs

UPDATED Information
August 2021
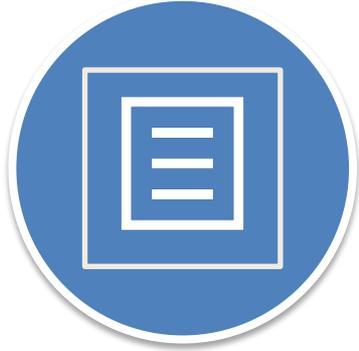
Context
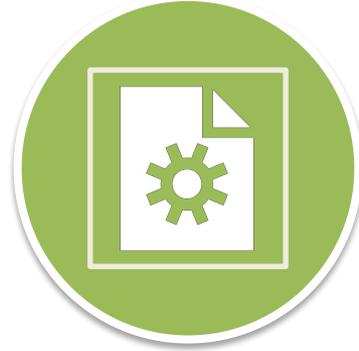
Changing
Conditions

Opportunities

Why structure the network as a community of practice?

The collective responsibility (shared and mutual commitment) among professional educators serves both individual and communal learning at all levels of the education system.

- maintain a focus on the shared problem
- accelerate the improvement process.

Bowman, 2021; Bryk et al., 2015; Campbell et al., 2016; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018; Hite et al., 2010 , Rincón-Gallardo & Fullan, 2018; Wenger et al., 2002

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Why continuous improvement?

"Learning organizations" intentionally and continually pursue getting better at what they do.

"Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it does." – W. Edward Deming & Paul Batalden

If we are going to change a system

SEE what the system is producing

**ENGAGE** with others to design something different

ACT

Why a focus on PLCs?

**An Authentic
Professional Learning Community**

"The professional learning community is the most powerful structure and strategy for enhancing educators' effectiveness and increasing students' successful learning."

"*Improvement* requires exchanging what is not working for something that has the potential to do so — this means making a *change* — and to change requires *learning* what the change is and how to use it."

Shirley Hord
Learning Forward Scholar & Laureate

Structural conditions

Shared values and vision

Supportive relational conditions

Critical elements of an effective PLC

Peers supporting peers

Shared and supportive leadership

Intentional collective learning

DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018; Hord, 1997; Learning Forward, 2015; Stoll et al., 2006; Vescio et al., 2008
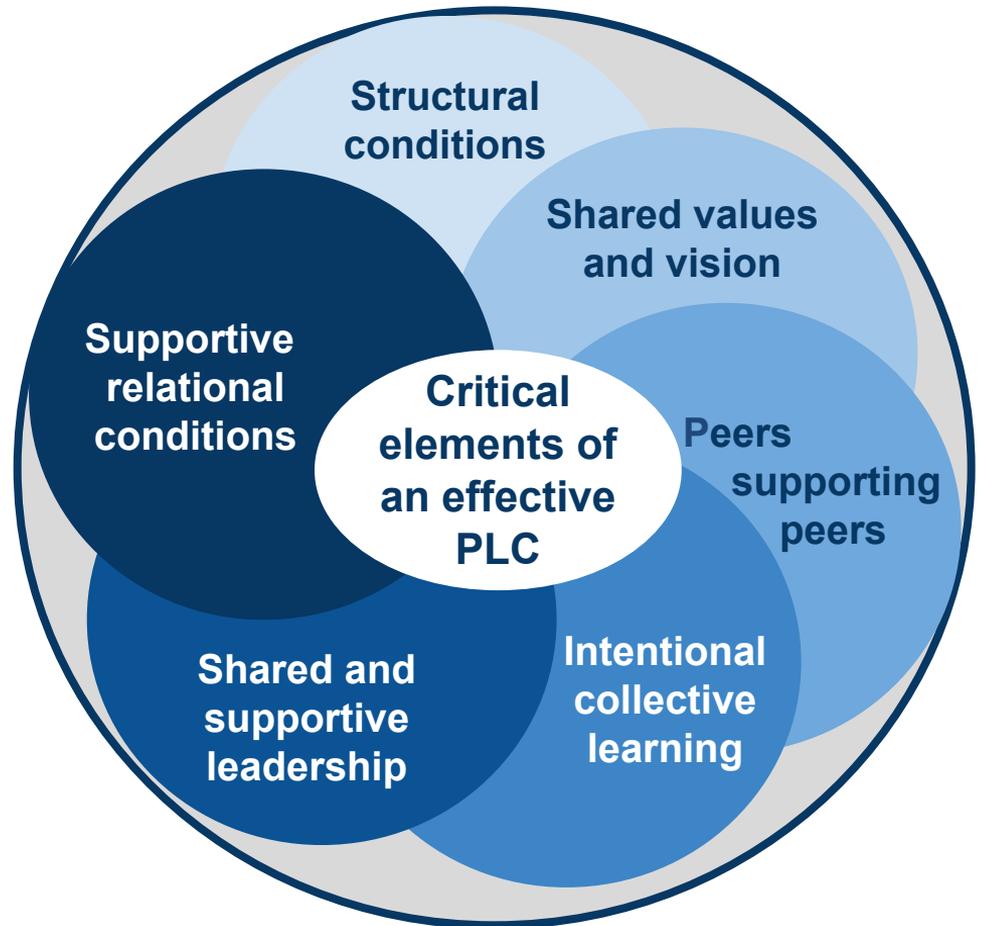
Learning & Inquiry in PLCs Problem of Practice

How do we assess and redesign professional learning communities in a way that utilizes the evidence base for collaborative inquiry to build an equitable and sustainable professional learning system for educator and student outcomes?

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Learning & Inquiry in PLCs Network Outcomes

- Improve the **relevance, quality, and coherence** of professional learning systems
- Access to **tools and resources** aligned to the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning
- Focus on **equity in professional learning**
- **Emphasis on data** to guide decision-making for educator and student learning
- **Collaboration** with like-minded leaders
- Clear and scalable **pathways for improvement**.
- Increase **capacity to create effective policies and practices** that guide professional learning

"Net Less Work"

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Networks Team

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How the work happens

Steering Committee

- 3 cross-functional team members
- Participate in monthly learning and coaching and network convenings
- Collaborate w/ Improvement Teams
- Work closely with LF coach

Improvement Teams

Including individuals with the most intimate knowledge of the process improved the success of the continuous process improvement model (Ellis & Castle, 2010)

- Coached by the steering committee
- Plan and test change ideas
- Invited to participate in learning webinars
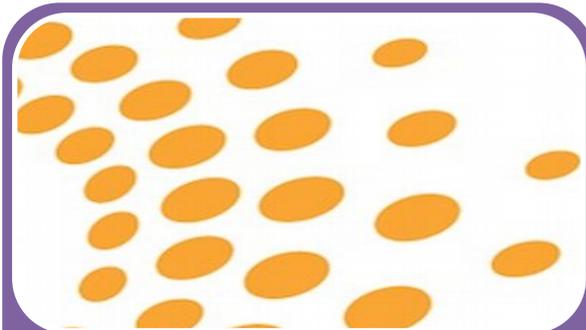
Learning Forward Coach

Facilitate and support professional learning and improvement cycles

Learning Cadence - Year 1

	Aug 21	Sept 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	June 22	July 22
Technical assistance to begin assessing current status of PLCs	██	██										
Professional learning sessions (90 minutes - Third Tuesday)		Related to the network focus areas featured thought leaders										
Facilitated peer-to-peer check-ins (90 minutes)			██			██				██		
Dedicated team planning with coaching support (60 minutes)		Dates and times set with Learning Forward Coach										
Network Convenings				★	Virtual Conference		★				★	

Cost and funding

Benefits (annual)

- Virtual network convenings (3)

- Regular, intensive, face-to-face, and virtual convenings for collaborative learning, planning, and professional development.

- Cycles of inquiry within teams.

- Critical friends conversations between teams.

- Virtual team coaching sessions.

- Opportunities for facilitated peer-to-peer learning between teams, across the larger group, and with the networked community.

- Standard Learning Forward memberships for the Core Team

- 3-day registrations for Core Team members to Learning Forward's Annual Conference

Annual fee

$22,500

ESSER funds through the **American Rescue Plan Act** can support participation in this network.

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Next Steps / Timeline

Application: gather basic info and start conversation
Membership Agreement: commitment to participate
Due September 17, 2021

Follow-up conversation with Network team member

Onboarding session(s) scheduled with Learning Forward Coach
August - September 2021

Convenings, Year 1
1. **November** 2-3, 2pm - 4pm ET (each day), Virtual
2. **February** 21-24 (2 days within the range), In-person
3. **June** 15-16, 2pm - 4pm ET (each day), Virtual

Questions and Discussion

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